

REMARKS

Applicants' acknowledge the previous allowance of claims 1 - 3 and 19 - 22. As indicated above, the rejected claims have been amended herein to place them in condition for allowance.

It is requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 4 and 5 under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,344,693 to Sanders. Claim 4 has been amended to indicate that the masking pattern comprises "at least one continuous unbroken line". Sanders does not teach the provision of such a masking pattern. Sanders only contemplates printing ink for the discontinuous spacer 63 and not continuous line members as in the claimed invention. As noted by the Examiner in the second paragraph at page 6 of the action, this amended recitation distinguishes over the Sanders teaching.

It is requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 12 - 14 and 17 - 18 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,980,676 to Meetze. As indicated above, claim 12 has been amended to include the slitting step previously presented in claim 16. The Meetze patent does not teach or suggest the slitting through the substrate, pressure-sensitive adhesive layer and masking.

Accordingly, claim 12 is patentably distinguished over Meetze. The Examiner has previously acknowledged the patentability of amended claim 12 by indicating claim 16 to be allowable.

For completeness, it is noted that the thickness limitation in claim 12 has been moved to the end of the claim for better form.

For the same reasons as indicated above, claims 13, 14, 17 and 18 are also in condition for allowance.

For all of the foregoing reasons, claims 1 - 5, 12 - 15 and 17 - 22 presently of record are in condition for final allowance and such action is requested.

If there are any fees required by this communication, please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0820, Order No. 26651US10.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

Joseph J. Corso, Reg. No. 25845

1801 East Ninth Street
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3108
(216) 579-1700

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